

THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE MAGAZINE PAGE

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The \$1,000,000 Picture Play The Public Never Saw



Showing How Charles Dana Gibson, James Montgomery Flagg, George McCutcheon and Other Artists and Authors Created a Priceless "Movie" for One Performance Only at Their Club Dinner

Characters in the \$1,000,000 Picture Play. From Left to Right—George Barr McCutcheon, Charles Hanson Towne, Wallace Irwin, James Montgomery Flagg, Charles Dana Gibson, Burgess Johnson, John Walcott Adams, Will Irwin, Tom Masson, Julian Street, Rupert Hughes.

As a special favor to readers of this newspaper they are given a glimpse on this page of a \$1,000,000 moving picture story that will never reach the public in any other way. This remarkable film, placed on view throughout the country in the usual way, probably would be worth even more than the million dollars it would have cost for such use, yet only one copy is in existence and that is safely locked up in the archives of the Dutch Treat Club of New York.

Why such neglect of money-making opportunities in this commercial age? you ask. Why such wastefulness of genius? Ah, that word "genius" explains it. Genius contains quirks and queer methods of ratiocination which it is hopeless for normal persons to understand. The geniuses in this case—authors, artists and poets—are of the capitalistic class, all plastered over with money by humble magazine publishers, who stand in line before their doors, hats in one hand and check books in the other. So, finding themselves full of coin and vaingloriousness, they said to each other:

"Come, let's squander our priceless best efforts on a masterpiece of art for one exhibition only to an audience composed of ourselves—and let the publishers and the public go hang!"

That's the genesis of the Million dollar moving picture story recently thrown on the screen just once, behind the closed doors of the Dutch Treat Club, choice bits of which are produced on this page.

If you doubt that this film is worth a million dollars, just consider who are the authors and actors. There's Charles Dana Gibson, illustrator, creator of "The Education of Mr. Pip," "The Gibson Girl" and other masterpieces of international fame, who won't sharpen a pencil for any publisher who talks in smaller amounts than four figures. Here you see him working for nothing as a disreputable "gunman."

The Billionaire Baby, Properly Stamped and Addressed, with the Prize Poem in Its Pocket, Gets Safely into Uncle Sam's Hands by Parcel Post



Note the contemptuous look on the Gibson face as he marches through the story thus wastefully, appearing to say to himself: "This is what I really think about money—no publishers being present."

Two other gunmen—Will Irwin and John Walcott Adams—are writers, with a monopoly of all the words in the dictionary which they sell retail to magazine editors for the price of a king's ransom. Another Irwin—Wallace, the fat one—who writes words which he sells for as much as ten cents each, in choice lots of ten thousand, makes the most expensive baby ever shown on any moving picture film.

James Montgomery Flagg, artist and author, whose prices cause publishers' shrieks of agony to resound throughout the land, figures as "Dickey Le Ginny Hen," a poet make-up to resemble Richard Le Gallienne. His three fellow poets in the film are Julian Street, Charles Hanson Towne and Burgess Johnson. Try to hire them to do anything for the public, and then go and place a mortgage on your printing presses for the means to get them

started. Surely something ought to be done about this. The Government has been heckling plutocratic publishers. Why should these luxurious artist and author chaps go unscathed?

To make up the balance of the value of this \$1,000,000 film it is only necessary to mention the names of the other participants:

Rupert Hughes, dramatist, the villain; George Barr McCutcheon, writer, the bartender and also the nurse; Tom Masson, editor and poet, postman and messenger boy; Compton McKenzie, novelist, a lady editor; Langhorne Gibson, artist, newsboy.

Total, \$1,000,000, just for one show before the members of the Dutch Treat Club, an organization composed of one hundred artists, authors and poets who are so tired of being invited to dinner by publishers that they have gone to the other extreme of herding by themselves, every member eating at his own expense. If you know anything about the time required to write a moving picture



"Now for the dirty work!"—Rival Poets and Gunmen About to Kidnap the Billionaire Baby, in Whose Pocket Dicky Le Ginny Hen Has Hidden His Prize Poem

"scenario," to costume and rehearse the company and turn the camera crank until the right results have been obtained, you will realize that this million dollar estimate is more than reasonable.

"Saved by Parcel Post; or, The Billionaire Baby"—that is the title of this moving picture story produced for one performance only. Its authors—Rupert Hughes and James Montgomery Flagg—tell it somewhat thus:

The scene opens in the Fritz-Carlton, a low dive. Four poets are discovered hungry and thirsty. In the background sits the villain and three gunmen, drinking and plotting. A newsboy enters, is held up by the gunmen and robbed of his pennies. The poets search their pockets and finally unearth a penny, with which they buy a copy of The American. With heads



In That Low Dive, the Fritz-Carlton, the Four Poets Read the 50,000 Prize Poem Offer, While the Gunmen Look on with Contempt

Returning to the Fritz-Carlton he boasts of his conquest, his poem and his certain victory in the competition. The other poets realizing the poem is far superior to anything they might do themselves, try to take it from him but he escapes.

In the next scene he returns to the nurse and finishes the poem. Other poets are on his trail. In despair he searches frantically for some safe place to hide the priceless child of his brain. A brilliant idea comes to him. He will place the poem in the jacket of the baby. No sooner thought of than the deed is done. The nurse flees with the child. The poets dash

"Foiled Again!" Rival Poets and Gunmen Outwitted by Dicky Le Ginny Hen, Who Gets the \$50,000 Prize

upon the scene, capture Dicky, and lash his manly form to a tree. Then begins a period of horrid torture to compel the brave hero to reveal the secret hiding place. It is only when one friend begins pulling out his precious hair that he weakens. He tells them where the papers are, but their courage is not equal to the feat of facing the nurse and child.

They bargain for the services of the gunmen. It is decided with their help to kidnap the only son and heir to John D. Rotensmiller. Cleverly the conspirators stalk their prey until at last they are cornered, and Dicky, seeing his dream of triumph shattered, collapses upon the trembling arm of the nurse. But help is at hand. At the moment when it seems all too true that villainy will triumph the child rises up in his wrath and lays poets and gunmen senseless at his feet with dull though soundless thuds from his manly fists.

They take refuge in flight with the conspirators clinging remorselessly to their trail. Brought to bay at last before a U. S. Parcel Post box, Dicky, brilliantly resourceful to the end, produces just the right quantity of stamps from his pocket, sticks them on the baby's nose, writes the address of the Bust Beautiful Magazine on his forehead, deposits him in the box, and turns to face the baffled conspirators with a sweet smile of calm content.

Into their midst pushes a U. S. postman. His duty is plain. With a wide gesture that expresses all the majesty of the powerful department behind him, he waves them to one side and disappears with the child.

The final scene opens in the office Magazine. Enter postman and his charge. With a graceful gesture the baby places the precious manuscript in the lady editor's hand. Dicky enters and stands shyly awaiting her decision. Behind him the perfidious poets and the disgruntled gunmen take their places. There is a moment of nerve-racking suspense as each scans the face of the arbitress of their poetic destinies.

Quickly the expression of interest on the baby's face gives place to one of ecstatic joy as she grasps the deep significance of the literary gem before her. From her desk she takes a huge bundle of greenbacks—50,000 one dollar bills—and places them in the trembling hands of Dicky. The conspirators fall prostrate upon their faces, and Dicky, his loved one and the baby, march triumphantly forth over their supine

